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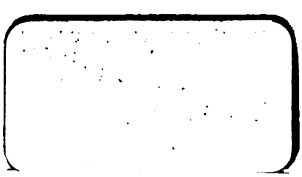

AN

ACCOUNT

OF

THE ISLAND OF

JAMAICA;

WITH

Reflections on the Treatment, Occupation, and Proviſions of the Slaves.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A DESCRIPTION

OF

The Animal and Vegetable Productions of the Iſland.

BY A GENTLEMAN LATELY RESIDENT ON A PLANTATION.

NEWCASTLE:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY S. HODGSON.

M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

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Advertiſement.

THE abolition of ſlavery being now a favourite national topic, an account of the treatment and uſe of the ſlaves in Jamaica may not be unacceptable to the public. The obſervations contained in the ſucceeding pages were made during nearly a twelvemonth's reſidence on a large eſtate of the Honourable Mr Ward, called Rhimeſbury, in the pariſh of Clarendon, Jamaica.

Prefixed is a general account of the iſland, with ſome particulars reſpecting the manners and cuſtoms of the inhabitants; alſo a deſcription of a dreadful hurricane which happened in the night of the 31ſt of July, 1784.

From the whole a reader may perhaps form ſome idea how far a general emancipation of the ſlaves may tend to their increaſe, civilization, and morality, as well as to the benefit of their employers.

That the negroes are ſtubborn, untractable, artful, revengeful, naturally indolent, and much addicted to thieving, muſt be allowed; yet can it be a matter of ſurprize, when we conſider their cruel treatment, and the irreſiſtible calls of unſatisfied nature to which they are expoſed, particularly during the dry ſeaſons in the ſavannahs?

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Insurrections of the ſlaves were formerly frequent; they were diſappointed in the laſt, owing to a miſunderſtanding with reſpect to the appointed day, when numbers of them were ſacrificed by way of example. They have lately confined their outrages to firing the towns for the ſake of plunder. To repel any future attempts the bedheads of the Europeans are all armed with muſquets, piſtols, and cutlaſſes. The domeſtic ſlaves are the moſt dangerous, having greater opportunities than the field negroes, and not having ſuch a dread of white men. It is to be hoped that, ſhould they be liberated, or Chriſtianity inculcated and eſtabliſhed amongſt them, their underſtandings may be wonderfully enlightened, their diſpoſition to rebellion repreſſed, and principles of honeſty and attachment to their employers made fixed and permanent. Every humane and thinking perſon muſt ſurely wiſh to ſee the African ſlave-trade aboliſhed; good treatment, a ſufficient allowance of proviſion, and a ſmall remiſſion of their labour, may render them fully competent to keep up the number on the plantations. That gentle methods may be adopted is the ſincere wiſh of

The AUTHOR.

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AN ACCOUNT OF

The Iſland of Jamaica, &c.

JAMAICA is certainly as fine an iſland as any in the Weſt-Indies, and the largeſt in poſſeſſion of the Engliſh, who became maſters of it during Cromwell's uſurpation, by means of a fleet and armament intended for the reduction of Hiſpaniola, which attempt they failed in; but the Spaniards, from whom this iſland was taken, will ever have reaſon to lament its loſs. It is remarkably well cultivated, much healthier than formerly, and having of late years been greatly cleared of wood, the ſea breezes have conſequently freer admiſſion into the interior parts.

The iſland is about 160 miles in length from eaſt to weſt, and in breadth at different parts 40 or 50 miles; it is narroweſt about the middle; in latitude 17. 18. and 19. north, in the 75th and 79th deg. weſt longitude, and nearly 4080 miles ſouth-weſt of London. A chain of mountains runs from eaſt to weſt, with leſſer mountains be-

low gradually decreaſing: The Blue Mountains, which overhang Kingſton and the extenſive ſavannah or plain, on the ſouthern edge of which it ſtands, are immenſely high; the top of the higheſt has never been explored, from a ſuppoſition that the air is too ſubtile for human inhabitants. Blue Mountain ſummit is a mile and 2099 feet in perpendicular height from the level of the ſea, which is 907 feet higher than the moſt elevated point of the Pyrenees. Catharine Hill is above 2099 feet high. The larger mountains are very rocky, and here and there are covered with moſs. The lofty trees, in great variety, grow out of the crannies, which are innumerable; from whence, and the almoſt conſtant rains and miſts, they receive their ſupport; thence alſo many fine rivers derive their ſource. Nature has indeed been laviſh of her power in theſe variegated regions; immenſe and irregular piles riſing one above another ſeem to realiſe the poetic fiction of Pelion on Oſſa, and the ſtupendous chaſms they exhibit are wildly and wonderfully pleaſing. By a ſeeming approximation of objects, from theſe eminences, at eight miles diſtance, the town of Kingſton with the whole of the ſavannah may be ſo diſtinctly ſeen beneath, that even paſſengers in the ſtreets may be deſcried with a glaſs. The

oppoſite town of Port-Royal the harbour, the ſhipping between, and the veſſels out at ſea, terminate the view, which is beautifully contraſted throughout. The air is often thirty degrees colder in the mountains than in the plains; in the former our own country's productions are frequently raiſed, ſuch as peaſe, ſtrawberries, and potatoes; and in their gardens are ſome of our moſt delicate flowers. Such too is the difference in the temperature of the air, that whilſt in the mountains they uſe blankets on their beds, a ſheet in the ſavannahs is often more than a ſufficient covering. It is by no means matter of ſurpriſe, that, from the intenſe heat in the plains, the inhabitants are ſubject to fevers and other diſtempers. Invalids are frequently removed into the mountains, where they recover very faſt, but as often relapſe on their return.

A governor is appointed at home, whoſe ſalary in time of peace is ſtated to be 5,000l. yearly; but in caſe of war it is often more, according to incident and diſpoſition. He is aided by a council of twelve, and forty-three repreſentatives choſen by the pariſhes. The militia, including freemen and maroon negroes, amount to about 12,000; but the white men are all called to arms in time of war. The maroon negroes are the deſcen-

dents of thoſe who preſerved their liberty by retiring into the moſt inacceſſible parts of the mountains, where they have a few poor ſettlements: Their leader is generally called Chinckee Joe. The merchants of Kingſton are well diſciplined and accoutred, amount to about 1200, and are muſtered on the ſhorteſt notice.

The iſland is divided into three counties, Surry, Middleſex, and Cornwall; which are ſubdivided into twenty pariſhes, St Catharine's, St Dorothy's, St John's, St Thomas in the Vale, Clarendon Vere, St Mary's, St Ann's, Kingſton, St Andrew's, Port Royal, St David's, St Thomas in the Eaſt, Portland, St George's, St Elizabeth's, Weſtmorland, Hanover, St James's, and Trelawney; theſe contain about 200,000 inhabitants, 174,000 of which are reckoned to be ſlaves.

The wind in this part of the world, out at ſea, blows conſtantly from the ſame points of the compaſs, except in hurricanes, which are not very dangerous at a diſtance from land. The ſea breeze blows the ſhips into the harbours on both ſides of the iſland, and a central wind called the land breeze drives them out; the tide ſeldom riſes above a foot and an half, and ſtrong currents often ſet againſt the ſea breeze.

In

In the pariſh of St Catharine is Jago de la Vega, or Spaniſh Town, the capital of the iſland, though Kingſton is the ſea-port. It is but a ſmall town, moſtly built of wood; has a neat church, of which Dr Lindſay is the preſent rector; is the reſidence of the governor, whoſe houſe, a ſtately fabric of ſtone, with the courts of law and public offices, form a handſome ſquare. On the ſouth-weſt ſide of the town runs a rapid river called Rio de Cobre. Here the merchants always clear out. The inhabitants live luxurioufly, and look upon thoſe of Kingſton as courtiers do upon citizens.

Port-Royal was formerly the principal ſea-port town, running weſt about twelve miles from the body of the iſland, having the ocean on the ſouth and a fine bay on the north, which forms a very commodious harbour, three leagues broad, and of depth enough for a ſhip of 700 tons to lie cloſe to the ſhore, well defended by forts and platforms of guns. It formerly contained 1500 houſes, was very populous, and much frequented by merchants and planters. But this fine port was three times deſtroyed within three years, in 1692 by an earthquake, in 1702 by a fire, and in 1722 by an inundation of the ſea. In the terrible earthquake of 1692 a remarkable circumſtance happened

ed to one of his majeſty's veſſels, the Swan frigate, lying at anchor there; by an almoſt inſtantaneous ſhock ſhe was hurried over the place where the houſes were juſt before ſtanding, and received no damage, which was the providential means of ſaving many of the miſerable inhabitants from drowning.

The town of Kingſton is regularly built, ſtreet behind ſtreet (moſtly of wood) to a conſiderable extent, being about a mile in length, and half a mile in breadth, interſected by other ſtreets in a parallel line, the whole forming a kind of ſquare; the ſavannah, on the edge of which the town ſtands, is bounded in a ſemicircle by the Blue Mountains to the eaſt, north, and nearly to the weſt. The lower ſtreets adjoin the wharf-yards and harbour, and conſiſt of merchants ſtores and ſhops of all kinds; they are very convenient, and let at high rents. In the north part of the town is a neat church with a low ſpire; and nearly adjoining is a ſpacious parade, with barracks for ſoldiers. There is alſo a theatre, aſſembly-rooms, and other places of public amuſement.

The merchants, from their pens in the country, or the higher part of the town, go down to their ſtores or ſhops in kittereens (ſingle horſe chairs) about ſeven in the morning. Having breakfaſted, they gene-

rally

rally get a ſecond breakfaſt at eleven, and dine at four or five, when all buſineſs is ended for the day, and the ſtores ſhut; the remainder of the evening they ſpend as inclination leads. Many reſort for an hour or two to the coffee-houſe, where they drink weak punch acidulated with lime-juice; and if no public diverſion is going forward, retire to bed at eight or nine, after having ſupped upon tea. The Jamaica coffee-houſe is ſituated at the lower part of the town, where a book is kept, and news of the arrival and going out of ſhips is inſerted in writing, with any thing particular that occurs.

Of the Europeans the Scotch are moſt numerous, as well in Kingſton as all over the iſland. London, Portſmouth, Plymouth, Briſtol, Liverpool, and Lancaſter, ſend moſt of the Engliſh who reſide here. There are alſo a great number of Jews, who, as they do in all other places, contrive to underſell every body elſe.

The brown people, or mulattoes, quadroons, and meſtees, increaſe every day; ſome of them have large property, and carry on an inferior kind of trade. Theſe, and many of the free negroes, eſpecially the women, keep lodging-houſes and taverns; the beds for ſtrangers are ſix ſhillings

lings and eight-pence, or a dollar for every ſingle night. It is the cuſtom of many merchants, on leaving the iſland, to emancipate ſeveral of their ſlaves.

The brown men are never received into the company of white people, who ſcarce condeſcend to ſpeak to them; but, on the contrary, are very free with the females, who are remarkably quick and lively; with theſe they hold a dancing aſſembly, which is generally much more crowded than the firſt aſſembly compoſed of Creole white ladies of the beſt families in the iſland, who in general are very haughty: Theſe never appear on foot in the ſtreets; but are, when out, in chaiſes, ſulkies, or kittereens.

Except a few excellent houſes which have lately been built of brick, and two or three of ſtone, after the Engliſh faſhion, by rich merchants, the houſes are in general of wood, very often mahogany, which is plentiful in this iſland: They conſiſt but of a room or two below ſtairs, with piazzas all round, and a ſtory above: The inhabitants ſit much in the piazzas in the evening to enjoy the breeze. The domeſtic ſlaves are very often kept as miſtreſſes; and when confidence is placed in them, are exceedingly faithful and uſeful in overlooking the others in their maſter's abſence.

The

The three claſſes mentioned before are produced by the following connexions:—From the mixture of perfect black and perfect white comes a mulattoe: This ſet retain the woolly hair of the negroes. The quadroons proceed from a white man and mulattoe woman; and theſe have the long European hair in general. The next order (meſtees) ariſe from a communication between a white man and quadroon woman; and the offspring of a meſtee woman with a white man are a perfect white, and free by the laws of the iſland.—The ſlaves never eat with the white people.

The days are not leſs than twelve, nor more than fourteen hours in length: The pleaſanteſt time for taking the air is a little before ſun-riſe, and half an hour after it; the evenings are very cloſe and hot; but the clouds in general exhibit the moſt beautiful imagery; at the dawning of the day the majeſtic columns and glowing tints they diſplay exceed all deſcription; and after ſun-ſet the mild lightnings are ſeen playing in a variety of directions upon the tops of the lofty mountains; whilſt the night-flies, graſshoppers, and crickets, make ſo great a buzzing, as very much to alarm a ſtranger, who cannot account for the unuſual noiſe; as well as the fire-flies, which, containing a

natural phoſphorus, appear like ſo many ſparks wherever their luminous bodies are wandering. There is ſcarcely any twilight here: It is about theſe times the inſects begin and end their depredations; particularly the muſquitoes, which are very troubleſome, eſpecially to Engliſhmen who bring with them a roaſt-beef habit, and are of ſanguine complexions.

The town ſtands low, is populous, and very unwholeſome: It is well ſupplied with water, there being many public pumps. The ſhips water is got at a place called Rock-Fort, about two miles up the harbour, and is reckoned very freſh and good. In general, near the ſea the ſprings are brackiſh. Many of the principal merchants have delightful pens up the Blue Mountains, or in the ſavannah, which are extenſive; and at the foot of them, a little off the road to Spaniſh Town, and about two miles to the weſt of Kingſton, is a place called Greenwich, where there is a pen called the admiral's pen. The houſe, erected for the uſe of the commander in chief of his majeſty's ſhips of war on that ſtation, is very large and commodious, and a handſome object in many points of view. At theſe pens or country-houſes, and on the land adjoining, they breed plenty of hogs, ſheep,

ſheep, goats, and poultry: Great quantities of vegetables and fruits of various kinds, with ground and bread-fruit, which will be hereafter deſcribed; and theſe, with what the negroes bring from the mountains, liberally furniſh the markets of Kingſton.

The merchants generally keep clerks who ſleep at the ſtores, the ſalaries of whom are uſually 100l. ſterling, or 140l. currency. Kingſton being often viſited by ſickneſs, and attendance and medicines high charged, many young men prefer the plantations in the country to living in town; though, if they ſtay any conſiderable time, they are often taken into partnerſhip as a reward for their ſervices.

About the center of Kingſton are the courts of law, which are roomy and convenient. Cauſes are carried on as with us; but no robes or gowns are worn. There are laws peculiar to the iſland, which are bound up in one volume. The ſeſſions are regularly kept throughout the iſland; and they have the benefit of appeal to England. No perſon is allowed to leave Jamaica till he has publicly advertiſed his intention to quit it three months before, that he may not defraud his creditors; and no

captain of a ſhip muſt take ſuch perſon on board.

Sunday being a day of reſt, it is aſtoniſhing to ſee the number of kitterees and other carriages on the roads: The ſtores are all ſhut; and even the ſlaves are allowed to recreate themſelves. It is the negroes' market day; they bring all ſorts of fruit for ſale in great abundance, and by their chearful looks one would imagine them the happieſt creatures breathing. In the afternoon they walk out in ſwarms; the wenches in gowns white as ſnow, white hats, and a handkerchief of the ſame colour over their woolly heads. The gowns are made like negligees; and being moſt of them very tall, and always preſerving an upright poſture, they appear to great advantage. Some are of a jet black, extremely well made, have beautiful features, lively piercing eyes, and teeth like ivory. They commonly end the day with dancing, the manner of which will be deſcribed hereafter.

The merchants in general live well. Turtle, and various other kinds of fiſh, are very plentiful. They kill no calves for veal, giving the preference to animal food of riper age. Of this the price is never leſs than one bit per pound, which is equal to ſixpence ſterling. They uſually kill their own mutton,

mutton, which is either fat to an extreme or very lean, according to the wetneſs or dryneſs of the ſeaſon. When meat is very ſcarce, they have recourſe to ſalt beef, pork, herrings, and cheeſe; the common price of the latter is two bits per pound, as is alſo that of butter. Theſe and flour are ſent from home; with ale, porter, cyder, wine, and many other articles. The negroes live chiefly upon freſh and dried fiſh, yams, ſweet potatoes, caſſava, plantains, cocoas, bananas, Indian corn roaſted, Guinea corn made into cakes, peaſe and beans of various kinds, which the climate affords in abundance. They uſe great quantities of red peppers in moſt of their meſſes, and are very fond of the plant called ocro. Coffee is alſo very plentiful, and grows chiefly in the mountains.

On the 30th of July, 1784, a violent hurricane viſited this iſland. It began about eight in the evening, without any previous alarm. The family with whom I then ſtaid had juſt retired to bed, without any apprehenſion of the approaching calamity. My hoſt had been twenty-five years acquainted with the iſland, and had experienced many dreadful hurricanes and fires, by which he had been ſeveral times nearly ſtript of his all. Never did I ſee conſternation more ſtrongly

ſtrongly painted in a human face than when he informed me a hurricane was beginning. I roſe in haſte, and we united our efforts in barricading and faſtening the doors and windows by every method we could deviſe. At that moment a loud craſh ſaluted our ears. We ran out, and beheld the negro-houſes laid even with the ground. The wretched inhabitants had been prudent enough to retire to the fields, except one who gave us all the aſſiſtance in his power. The gale became exceedingly furious, and ſuch a conflict of elements I never ſaw before. The clouds rolled along in thick and murky volumes, the rain poured in torrents, whilſt the terrible yelling of the wind beggared all deſcription. We were covered as with a deluge of rain and ſand; branches of trees were darted through the air; and loud and frequent was the noiſe of falling buildings. In this ſtage of the hurricane we went to the ſtable and releaſed the poor horſes, every joint of them trembling, as partakers in the common horror. We had ſcarcely entered the houſe, and with the aſſiſtance of the negro ſecured the door, when a furious blaſt from the eaſt carried away the gable end and part of the roof to the diſtance of forty yards, where we found them the next morning. The gale ſeemed

now

now to be at its height, and we ſat down in the hall, the ſtrongeſt room of the houſe, waiting the event. The wind ſoon began to decreaſe, and totally ſubſided by eleven o'clock.

The return of day brought to view a ſcene perfectly diſtreſſing: Bodies of great weight and magnitude were moved out of their places; cannon were diſmounted, walls and pillars of brick thrown down, large trees torn up by the roots, the ground deeply furrowed in many places, whole ſtreets of houſes laid open, and the negroes according to cuſtom were pillaging whatever they could lay hands on, even from one another, ſaying, "God Almighty had thrown open the doors and windows for them."

But the moſt diſmal and ſhocking proſpect was the harbour; out of a great number of veſſels, only two men of war had been able to ride out the ſtorm, and even theſe not without the loſs of all their maſts. The merchantmen were all ſunk, or caſt high and dry on ſhore. Many keels of ſhips were ſeen juſt riſing above the ſurface of the water, whilſt a number of poor ſailors were clinging to the tops of maſts of others, where they had remained all night, and were diſplaying handkerchiefs as ſignals of diſtreſs: Negroes were immediately ſent off

to

to ſave them. Fortunately the canes, being low, did not ſuffer much; but great damage was done to the mills and houſes on the plantations. The ſtorm had been as deſtructive in the mountains as in the ſavannahs, and much damage was done to the ground-fruit and bread-fruit. In conſequence of this dreadful viſitation, proviſions immediately roſe to an exorbitant price; a great ſcarcity was dreaded by every one, but that evil was happily averted by the arrival of ſeveral ſhips.

RHIMESBURY, an eſtate ſituate in the pariſh of Clarendon, at the foot of Carpenter's Mountains, bounded on the north-weſt by Milk River, and on the ſouth-eaſt by the pariſh of Vere; it is above ſix miles in breadth, and rather more in length; has been cut out from the midſt of the wood, by which it is now ſurrounded; and lies forty miles weſt of Kingſton.

The great houſe or pen was formerly large and ſtraggling, but it has lately been rebuilt and made very commodious; it conſiſts of a ſuite of rooms raiſed upon piazzas, with a large dining-room in the center, all floored with mahogany; there are alſo galleries above, covered with handſome Venetian blinds on every ſide, which render them cool and agreeable; two rooms below are occupied

occupied by the overſeer of the pen. The attorney or ſuperintendent, when he viſits the plantation, reſides here; it is about half a mile from the ſugar-works. There are good out-offices, ſtables, and an excellent garden; the paſtures adjoining are planted with ſweet and ſour orange, lemon, lime, and other trees; the bloſſoms of green and yellow fruit are ſeen at the ſame time, are beautiful to the eye, and grateful to the ſmell. Large paſtures extend to a conſiderable diſtance, on which there are often a thouſand head of cattle in charge of the overſeer, a vaſt quantity of ſwine, poultry of all kinds, and flocks of ſheep and goats, which are all numbered at ſet times, to prevent their being ſtolen by the negroes, who have been known to convey an ox into the woods, and devour him when roaſted. The number of the pen negroes is about 150, who are employed in clearing the paſtures, raiſing corn, and often to aſſiſt in loading the merchantmen.

The ſugar-works are to the ſouth of the pen; and conſiſt of the mill for grinding canes, the boiling-houſe, cooling-houſe, and ſtill-houſe: Near theſe are ſeveral ſtores, and the overſeer's houſe, which is a ſlight erection of wood; conſiſting of a hall and four bed-chambers,—one for himſelf, ano-

ther for travellers, and one for each book-keeper. There are alſo two other rooms nearly adjoining for the carpenter and plumber. A ſurgeon from a neighbouring plantation viſited this occaſionally; though they are in general fixed with a ſtated ſalary.

The hot-houſe for the ſick and runaway negroes is near-hand; in which are ſtocks where the delinquents lay for a conſiderable time, night and day, and are flogged regularly every Monday morning at the diſcretion of the overſeer, or rather at his will; For ſometimes they uſe no diſcretion, as was the caſe on this eſtate, and I fear on too many others.

The negro-houſes lay at a very ſmall diſtance between the pen and ſugar-works; They are miſerable hovels indeed; but they content the poor inhabitants, who are wonderfully chearful conſidering their ſituation and treatment. They are allowed to keep hogs and poultry; but if their hogs break into the cane-pieces, they are ſhot by command of the overſeer. They have likewiſe an acre of ground each; and are allowed two days in a week out of crop-time to till it, Sunday being one. Whilſt the crop is getting in (which generally laſts four or five months) Sunday is their only day; but

though

though at this time they are (if poſſible) harder worked, they ſeem to enjoy it much: They ſing day and night, and grow very fat; this change in the midſt of extreme labour ſeems to ariſe from their continually ſucking the raw juice of the canes, which is of a very rich and nutritious quality. They frequently in the wet ſeaſons raiſe more ground-fruit, bread-fruit, and vegetables, as well as poultry, than they can uſe: The ſuperfluity they ſell; and will ſometimes take turkies to Spaniſh Town and Kingſton markets, (the latter place being forty miles diſtant) beginning their journey on Saturday night after their work, and returning before daylight on Monday morning to renew their labour. In the dry ſeaſons flour and herrings, Guinea corn, or Indian corn, are delivered out to them, with a ſmall portion of which they contrive to live; perhaps they owe their good ſpirits chiefly to vegetable diet, which indeed is proper enough in ſo hot a climate. But before I proceed to give a further account of them, I ſhall ſpeak of the ſalaries and employment of the white people.

The attorney (already mentioned) is the chief manager of the plantations; he is paid by the owner, who appoints him at home according to agreement: His buſineſs is to

ſee that every thing is in order and properly conducted; and if any complaints are made by the negroes, the remedy lies in him: But they too often have a multiplicity of buſineſs in various places to attend ſufficiently to their great charge; and the overſeers, who are often illiterate and vulgar, take advantage in their abſence to tyrannize over thoſe in their power, who dare not complain. It would be a good regulation to confine the attorneys more to their plantations, which would increaſe their number, and be the means of keeping the eſtates in better order; they ſhould alſo in ſome meaſure be anſwerable for the treatment of the negroes and other ſlaves.

The overſeer acts under the direction of the attorney, ſo far as relates to the management of the plantation; his ſtated ſalary in general is 100l. ſterling, or 140l. currency. The entire ordering of the under-overſeers or book-keepers (of which there are commonly two) is his province, as is alſo their diſmiſſion in caſe of ill behaviour or non-performance of orders; he has charge of all the ſtock and ſtores, and the proviſions are diſtributed to the negroes at his diſcretion, as is alſo their cloathing, which for the men conſiſts of Ruſſia duck for frocks and trowſers; a hat for the women, linſey-

linſey-woolſey for petticoats, and Ruſſia duck for frocks, which is all they wear. It is his buſineſs alſo to order each particular day's work, to take a daily account of the negroes, and what buſineſs they are employed in, to viſit the ſick in the hot-houſe, and to ride over the whole of the plantation; he likewiſe orders the puniſhment of delinquents. He appoints the brown women for taking care of the houſe, waſhing the linen, and cooking; and the boys (of which there are uſually five or ſix) for waiting upon the white people; he alſo orders the proviſions for their table, and is in every reſpect the maſter of the houſe; he is to take care of travellers, to give them a bed, to entertain them, and provide for their horſes; this is the cuſtom upon all plantations, as there are few inns or taverns on the road. They are never charged any thing for ſubſiſtence. He is to take care that the ſugars and rum are ſent down to the wharfs, and that the hogſheads and puncheons are in good order and full when they are put on board the ſhips; which buſineſs he generally leaves to a book-keeper, as he ought never to be long abſent from the plantation, the good quality of the ſugar and rum chiefly depending on his ſkill and attention, though more upon that of the

the negro boilers and diſtillers, who in general are the moſt experienced ſlaves upon the eſtate. He ought to keep a conſtant correſpondence with the attorney.

The under-overſeers or book-keepers are young men from home, who are engaged at 40l. per annum currency. As two of them are uſually kept on each plantation, they take it in turns to go to the field with the negroes, or to ſtay at home with the keys of the ſtores, which are conſtantly wanted: In crop-time, one uſually attends the boiling-houſe, where the ſugar is made; the other the ſtill-houſe. During the getting in of the crop, they only reſt ſix hours out of the twenty-four, for on Sunday evenings the mill is ſet to work at five or ſix o'clock. The reſt of the year they riſe at day-break; breakfaſt at ſeven with the overſeer upon herb tea or coffee, when half an hour is allowed; they come home at twelve, and a conch-ſhell is blown to call the negroes to dinner, who in leſs than an hour are to go out again at the blowing of the like ſhell, and are immediately followed by one of the book-keepers, who again attends them till after ſun-ſet; ſoon after which they ſup, and retire to bed when they pleaſe.

The perſon who keeps the keys counts over

over the ſmall ſtock every morning, and delivers in a liſt, which is afterwards entered in a book.

An account of the white people, number of negroes, and great ſtock upon the plantation and pen, is ſent by the reſpective overſeers, ſigned and ſworn to by themſelves or the head book-keeper, every quarter, to a perſon appointed by a general aſſembly of the iſland for each pariſh. On the eſtate were 250 ſlaves: An hundred head of oxen fed in the paſtures, which were uſed in preference to horſes or mules for the wains and waggons; a dozen of them are ſometimes yoked in pairs, and four wainmen and as many boys are appointed out of the negroes to take care of them. In theſe carriages they will convey eight hogſheads of ſugar to the wharfs at a time, though after a very wet ſeaſon they are often obliged to leave them ſticking in the mire. About 150 horſes and mules are kept for the uſe of the eſtate, chiefly for the mill, and a few of them for riding, when occaſion requires a white man's attendance at a diſtance.

Thoſe that can afford to purchaſe horſes are allowed to keep them on the plantation, and they ſometimes gain conſiderably by buying and ſelling them; they uſually purchaſe them young, and break them. If

they

they are able to buy negroes, they may let them out at two bits (fifteen-pence) per day or upwards; and if tradeſmen, for a great deal more. The carpenters, plumbers, and bricklayers, generally make fortunes, as the hurricanes ſo frequently blow down the mills and other buildings.

When the ſmall ſtock upon the plantation are in a poor ſtate and not fit to kill, (which is often the caſe in very dry ſeaſons) and the ground-fruit and bread-fruit ſcarce, they have recourſe to the proviſions ſent from home, ſuch as beef, pork, herrings, and flour; ſo that the planters in general live well, as fiſh is often ſent them twice a-week.

A good garden adjoins the houſe, containing a variety of vegetables, ſuch as peaſe and beans of many kinds, ſweet potatoes, caſſada, peppers, pine-apples, pumpkins, cucumbers, and the favourite vegetable called ocro. This plant grows as high, and ſomething like, the holly-oak; it blows a yellow flower, that leaves behind a head about the ſize of a ſhort thick cucumber; when full grown, the ſurface is furrowed. It ought to be pulled when the head is young and ſmall. They are beſt and moſt tender when the ſize of a large walnut; if older, they are ſtringy, and the ſeed is red; many heads are upon one ſtalk. It is a very

ry glutinous pulp, and the chief ingredient in a diſh called pepper-pot; red pepper, and a little ſalt beef, are boiled with it till the ſoup becomes rich.

All the gardens abound with pine-apples; the different ſorts of which are mentioned under ananas, in the deſcription of plants at the end of this account.

The mill for grinding canes ſtands in the center of all the buildings, and is of a curious conſtruction; the roof is of an octagonal form, ſmall at the top, and very wide at the bottom; in the center is placed the main roller, which is often made of the cabbage tree, (hereafter deſcribed) ſo hard a wood that a muſquet ball will ſcarcely make any impreſſion. Cogs are placed ſo as to turn thoſe of two other rollers; the negroes put the canes between the rollers, and the juice is expreſſed into a vat beneath, from whence it runs by a lead gutter, raiſed upon poſts to a proper height, into the firſt ciſtern in the boiling-houſe; ſhafts are faſtened to the rollers, and extend to a platform, which forms a circle to the mill, and to which the horſes or mules are yoked, and which are relieved by freſh ones every four hours; the negro boys ſit upon the ſhafts, drive the mules round with little whips in a continued trot, and ſing day and

night. On ſome plantations they have water-mills.

The boiling-houſe is near the mill, in which are ſeven coppers, decreaſing in ſize after the two firſt, which are called *St Hild's coppers*; the mouths of the furnaces are on the outſide, each furnace having particular negroes to watch it; as alſo the coppers, where they toſs about the liquor with long ladles, calling to the negroes on the outſide to increaſe or ſlacken the heat as occaſion requires. The ſmalleſt and laſt copper is called the *teach*, which has a remarkably hot fire kept under it. After a very little lime mixed with water has been thrown into it, the ſyrup begins to form a grain upon the ladles, which is thrown off into wood coolers, where having ſtaid ſome time, it is carried to hogſheads placed in an adjoining building, (the cooling-houſe). Holes are made in the hogſheads with plantain ſuckers ſtuck through, from whence the molaſſes drain into a ciſtern like the hold of a ſhip, the hogſheads ſtanding upon beams about a foot from each other. This proceſs is called *potting the ſugar*. The book-keeper who attends the boiling-houſe, takes an account of the number of times the teach is thrown off; and from the quantity of ſugar they can judge of the goodneſs of the canes.

The

The molaſſes are preſerved as an ingredient for making rum; the ſkimmings of the cane juice and the refuſe of the two firſt coppers, called *dunder*, are carried by lead gutters to the ſtill-houſe.

The ſtill-houſe, at a ſmall diſtance from the laſt, is a large building, having a rum ſtore to the eaſt, the windows of which are Venetian blinds. It contains ten deep ſquare ciſterns of wood, ſunk in clay hard beat down, where the ingredients for making the rum are put, which ferment together for nine or ten days. The raiſed furnaces, upon which the ſtill-heads are placed, are on the outſide of the houſe, communicating with the worms on the inſide, which are covered with water in a reſervoir or tank, ſupplied, as often as occaſion requires, by a breeze-mill of ſuch a conſtruction that it is ſet a-going by one man: It has ſails like ours in England, and the water is thrown up by pipes into the tank, as well as various parts of the boiling-houſe. A great many pumps are uſed in the ſtill-houſe, ſome of them portable; and ſo much lead and copper work is required in and about theſe houſes, that the plumber and his gang of negroes have employment enough.

The ingredients having fermented and

ſettled in the ciſterns, the ſtill-heads are filled. The firſt time it goes through the worms it is called *low-wine*; the next diſtillation it comes out rum; and as long as the liquor will ſink oil, it is put up in puncheons for uſe; the reſt is returned to the low-wine butt, which ſtands cloſe by, to be diſtilled again. A new method of proving rum was introduced this year, (1784) by glaſs bubbles filled with different quantities of air, every one ſo marked, that, by their ſinking or ſwimming, the ſtrength of the rum is aſcertained.

I arrived about the middle of Auguſt upon the plantation, the time when the Guinea corn had not been long planted; this was done on large plots of ground; and the expected rains not falling, vaſt pains were uſed in *renewing the corn*, as it is called, after the following method: Having ſprung in tufts here and there, they took up a number of ſtalks with the roots, and cutting off the long tops, they tranſplanted them, making holes at the diſtance of a foot from each other, placing two roots in different directions in each hole, and covering them with ſoil; they repeat this renewal ſeveral times when there are no rains; but if it is wet weather ſoon after, the whole field looks green and lively in twenty-four hours.

After

After this we were employed in planting canes where they had miſſed ſpringing after the laſt crop; ours were moſtly *rattoons*, a term given to thoſe that have been planted ſeveral years, and, being cut down, ſpring again of themſelves; the ſavannahs generally produce them; in the mountains they uſually plant them anew every year. Our method was to take ſtalks of canes and ſplit them between knot and knot, placing two pieces at equal diſtances, in a contrary direction, in the deep furrows made with the negroes' hoes; theſe furrows or cane-holes are remarkably ſtrait and exact, being ſet out by a line and ſticks put down at proper places. This buſineſs took up a conſiderable time.

Some of the canes being higher than the reſt, require weeding; each negro taking his row, which is extended to a great diſtance. In this buſineſs they are accompanied by a book-keeper and negro-driver; the laſt of whom has a long whip, with which he gives them a cut when they are lazy. The overſeer viſits them three or four times a-day. When the canes are high it is a very diſagreeable office to follow the negroes; in the morning on account of the heavy dews, and afterwards from the exceſſive ſuffocating heat; and

even

even when the ſea-breeze ſprings up, the height of the canes prevents in a great meaſure its refreſhing effects. Add to theſe evils that of broiling under a vertical ſun, the teazing of myriads of ants, and the diſagreeable ſtench from the perſpiration of the negroes.

The intenſe heat, with the fatigue of getting through the canes, often cauſe new comers to faint; the negroes, being in their native climate, take no harm; but they are ſometimes afflicted with a contagious diſorder called the *yaws*, which is believed to be of the venereal kind, and moſt filthy, as they are covered all over with a ſort of cruſt, and their legs are particularly bad; they are ſent to the ſea-ſide when they have this complaint, being totally unfit for work. The chegoe, or gigger, often renders them ſad objects; but if theſe get to any head, it is generally from want of care.

The gigger is at firſt a ſmall worm, which gets imperceptibly under the ſkin, (chiefly of the feet, and ſometimes to the joints of the knees and elbows) where having formed itſelf a neſt, it lays eggs, and grows to the ſize of a pea in a ſhort time. As ſoon as the place begins to itch, it is uſual to ſearch it with a penknife not very ſharp, taking care to turn it out whole, that none of the eggs be

be let out to remain under the ſkin, for they would produce freſh giggers, and at length ruin the patient; the parts affected are often rubbed with tar.

It is frequently neceſſary to clear the paſtures of the underwood, which grows very faſt in the wet ſeaſon, and this is done with bills and ſharp cutlaſſes. The fences are kept remarkably neat and regular; they grow like our hawthorn, but much higher; and when tall, the blacks ſtrip the branches three parts down, and interweave them in an ingenious manner.

The method of making lime here is worthy of obſervation. They chuſe a brook-ſide, where are limeſtones and plenty of wood at hand; the negroes are divided into two gangs, the greater and ſmaller in general, but now they are ordered to unite; and I dare ſay it is a great entertainment to them, for the boys and girls are diſpatched with baſkets to get ſtones, branches, and leaves of underwood; the men fell trees, and chop them in pieces. A flat piece of ground is choſen by the overſeer in a proper place, and two or three rows of thick pieces of wood form the foundation of a circular pile; branches and leaves are ſtrewed above theſe, then a layer of limeſtones, and ſo on alternately, tapering to the top, and leaving here

and

and there a piece of wood jutting out by way of ladder to mount the pile, which is often raiſed pretty high; it is then ſet fire to. This employed all the negroes a fortnight; the mending of ſome roads, a laborious piece of work, another.

There are two excellent wharfs belonging to Rhimeſbury, called the old and new; the former is about nine miles off, and is ſituated at the ſea-ſide, near the mouth of Milk River; the latter part of the road is through a thick wood, which is often impaſſable for the wains and waggons, particularly after a hurricane, and in time of rain it is belly-deep for horſes. The new wharf is ſix miles up the river, and cloſe to it Mr Smith the attorney has built a moſt excellent ſtorehouſe for the rum and ſugar, and a crane of ſuch contrivance, as, with the ſtrength of one man, to hoiſt an hogſhead of ſugar into the ſtore, a conſiderable height. The ſtores are carried down the river, which is deep and narrow, in a large boat called a *bungay*, made out of the cotton-tree, and capable of carrying five or ſix hogſheads: As theſe trees are ſometimes eighty feet high, the boats are made long and narrow, ſuitable to the river, which, if navigable further up the country, the advantage to this part of Jamaica would be conſiderable, as they often delay ſending their

their ſugars in the rainy ſeaſon on account of the depth of the roads, which hurts their market.

At Chriſtmas the ſlaves are allowed three days holiday, during which time they are quite at liberty, and have herrings, flour, and rum. The prime negroes and mulattoes pay a viſit to the white people during the feſtivity, and are treated with punch; one of them attends with a fiddle, and the men dreſs in the Engliſh mode, with cocked hats, cloth coats, ſilk ſtockings, white waiſtcoats, Holland ſhirts, and pumps. They dance minuets with the mulattoe and other brown women, imitating the motion and ſteps of the Engliſh, but with a degree of affectation that renders the whole truly laughable and ridiculous. When the holidays are over, without the leaſt appearance of fatigue from their extraordinary exertions night and day, they chearfully return to their work. Every Saturday night many divert themſelves with dancing and ſinging, which they ſtile plays; and, notwithſtanding their week's labour, continue this violent exerciſe all night. But their own way of dancing is droll indeed; they put themſelves into ſtrange poſtures, and ſhake their hips and great breaſts to ſuch a degree, that it is impoſſible to refrain from laughing,

though they go through the whole performance with profound gravity, their feet beating time remarkably quick; two of them generally dance together, and ſometimes do not move ſix inches from the ſame place. After the interment of a corpſe, they always dance and ſing dolefully; but there is no knowing what they ſay on theſe occaſions. They uſed formerly to have no other inſtrument than a bow with two or three wires, which they ſtruck with a ſtick, making a noiſe ſtrangely diſſonant and uncouth.

After Chriſtmas, the canes are moſt of them high, and require continual weeding with hoes; ſoon after, ſome of them begin to look yellow, a proof of the approach of crop-time, when every one begins to be buſy in preparation.

I had once occaſion to attend the gang of coopers, to reckon the ſtaves for the hogſheads and puncheons they had been cutting ſome time before in the woods; but it was a moſt diſagreeable jaunt, and took us up four days. We were upon our legs from before ſun-riſe till after ſun-ſet, with very little intermiſſion. In the mornings the dews fell heavily upon us; and the underwood being at that time uncommonly high, the road was rendered ſo intricate that the negroes were under the neceſſity of clearing them

them with ſharp cutlaſſes; nor ſhould we have known where the ſtaves lay, but for the boughs of trees which the negroes had formed into an arch near them. After a little time we were almoſt baked in the hot ſun, and the woods were cloſed in ſuch a manner that we received no benefit from the ſea-breeze when it ſprung up; this, together with the ſight of black and yellow ſnakes, (ſome of the latter twenty feet long) a multitude of ſcorpions, rats, and ants, under the ſtaves; the quantities of waſps neſts, (theſe inſects being of a very large kind, and their ſtings fraught with a virulent venom) in the many lime-trees which we paſt, made the expedition not only diſagreeable and wearieſome, but horrible and dangerous.

One of the negroes was ſo ſtung in the face by a ſingle waſp, that he was a frightful object for two or three days; and it was a fortunate circumſtance that the whole body of them did not attack him at once.

On the 4th of February we began to cut canes, and took upon us our different charges; the negroes were appointed to their ſtations, ſome to the boiling-houſe, others to the mill, and others again to the ſtill-houſe, which laſt were divided into ſeparate watches, and the mill was kept going night and day. A great majority were cutting canes in the

field; the wainmen and boys were buſy leading; and every one, in ſhort, was in continual motion. The canes, after the juice was expreſſed, were dried in the yard, and became good traſh for the furnaces, which were alſo ſupplied from large piles of wood; the green tops of the canes are cut off before, and ſerve as excellent provender for the cattle and horſes; the offals and refuſe of every thing make the hogs exceedingly fat.

All the time the negroes are buſy with the crop, they make ſo much noiſe in ſinging that they may be heard a great way off; and from that circumſtance, added to their duſky hue, they have no ſmall reſemblance, in the eye of a ſtranger, to a ſwarm of bees. As I have before mentioned the proceſs of making ſugar and rum, I will now endeavour to give an account of the planting the great or Indian corn, which takes up about a week in the wet month of April, when the rains are ſometimes ſo heavy, that they are obliged to leave off grinding canes for that time.

The large fields are generally ſquare, and contain a great many different cane-pieces, between each of which a ſpace is left for Guinea-graſs and Scotch-graſs, the former remarkably ſucculent and luxuriant, and an excellent

excellent food for the ſtock; they are both of infinite uſe, as they grow when the native graſs is burnt up and exhauſted, particularly the Guinea-graſs, which is moſt in eſteem, though very lately introduced upon the iſland: Some have planted it with ſuch ſucceſs near the towns, that it has yielded them vaſt profit.

The great corn is planted between each row of canes, which, having been cut, are at that time low. The negroes plant the grain in ſlight furrows made with their hoes, not profuſely, but after the manner of our beans in gardens; the ground being moiſt, it ſoon appears above the ſurface, and in the beginning of June a large crop is reaped, without harming the canes in the leaſt. The grain is incloſed in a large huſk, which is pulled off with the hand, as are alſo the heads of the Guinea-corn, which is reaped a little before Chriſtmas. The great corn is chiefly eat by the negroes, who are fond of it roaſted; it is frequently given to horſes, eſpecially in towns. The Guinea-corn, when ground, makes tolerable cakes, which are almoſt as thin as a wafer. The heads unthraſhed are given to the hogs.

The canes were all cut, and the crop ended by the 4th of June, juſt before I left the iſland;

iſland; and they were buſy ſending the ſugars and rum aboard the different ſhips.

I ſhall now make ſome obſervations on the abilities and diſpoſitions of the negroes and other ſlaves as they appeared to me: The men amongſt the blacks are moſtly active and very ſtrong; I have known one of them carry a white man, who has not been able to walk, for a mile and upwards on his back, without once ſetting him down or being at all fatigued. Many of them are tall and well made, but their legs are often faulty in ſhape; they ride well, and ſome of them in the towns play the backſword with great adroitneſs; in general they are very cunning and given to tricking, do not ſeem fond of their wives, but ſtill are jealous of them; they underſtand flattery as well as moſt people, and are of themſelves indolent and naſty. The brown men are not ſo ſtrong or capable of work, and are more thieviſh if poſſible than the negroes; ſome of them are very good looking, and of a large ſize.

The women are a good deal like the men, but ſtill more artful; very fond of Europeans, and will do any thing for them. The black only go to the field; the brown women are generally kept by the white men, except now and then a favourite negro, which

which ſome few prefer. I have ſaid before that they can be faithful; they are very fond of their children, and though the white men go to a diſtant part of the iſland and deſert them, they ſtill obſerve the ſame unremitted care and attention to their offſpring. Their ſhifts are of the fineſt Holland, when the liberality of their keepers will allow it; and this they pride themſelves moſt in. Some of them are really handſome, and with the addition of a white or chintz gown and petticoat and white hat, look very neat: In common, they are fond of red and blue calamanco for petticoats; coral necklaces and gold ear-rings pleaſe them much. In their perſons they are remarkably clean, bathing twice a-day.

I cannot omit mentioning the good effects of inoculation on this eſtate: Thirty children, adult, Creole, and Guinea negroes, took the infection, and got well through; out of that number only one child died; the reſt were ſick but a very ſhort time, and thinly marked. A phyſician and ſurgeon attended, who received at the rate of 2s. 6d. per head for each. The child that died belonged to a mulatto woman, and no parent in the univerſe could be more affected; ſhe fell out of one fit into another, and for a long time was inconſolable.

The

The women are remarkably jealous of each other, and carry that paſſion to the greateſt exceſs. They ſometimes do much miſchief by adminiſtring poiſons, of which they have various kinds in the iſland, ſome of them very ſubtile and lingering in their effects. The general name with the negroes for theſe poiſons is *obea*, which is frequently given to one another upon any ſlight cauſe; they do it in ſecret, and keep it ſo, nor is the perſon who adminiſters it often found out. One poor black wench, called *Juno*, was ſuſpected of having taken ſome from a merry, ſtout, hard-working girl; ſhe of a ſudden grew downcaſt, ſuffered almoſt a total loſs of appetite, and continued thus without any viſible decay or alteration for five months; before I left the iſland, the negroes ſaid "ſomebody had given her *obea*."

The negro-women are not prolific, owing perhaps to climate, conſtitution, poor living, and hard work; or probably to all the circumſtances united. We had about a dozen New Guinea negroes brought on the plantation in the courſe of ten months; they ſeemed low-ſpirited, perhaps from the voyage, which is generally fatal to great numbers, and thoſe who ſurvived having experienced the ſevereſt uſage and confinement, it is no wonder they were dejected and did not

not thrive well at firſt; but they ſoon grew ſprightly, and went through the inoculation and ſmall-pox without ſuffering much.

The overſeer uſed to puniſh the ſlaves for trivial faults, and that very ſeverely; after ordering them three or four dozen laſhes with a long whip (which is always performed by the negro-driver with great dexterity) over the buttocks, whilſt ſmarting with pain, he uſed to give them the further diſcipline of *ebonies*, which is ſomething like our birch with ſhort prickles; the poor creatures are always ſtretched upon the ground, one holding each limb. I am ſorry to ſay they do not ſeem to feel for each other.

There are churches in every pariſh of this iſland; yet, except in the towns, I fear they are little frequented but on that awful occaſion the burial of the dead. The planters ſeem to have no religion at all, attending to nothing but the means of attaining ſuperfluous wealth, at the expenſe of both the health of body and ſoul; and it cannot be a matter of wonder that thoſe who are conſtantly inflicting puniſhment on their fellow-creatures, ſhould be deaf to every call of the mild voice of Chriſtianity. Should a planter begin his career with any of the finer feelings of the ſoul, continued

habits of cruelty ſoon entirely deſtroy them. Where, alas! is that charity that "ſuffers long and is kind?" Art thou, O divine emblem of all goodneſs, fled the earth? In what dark corner of the univerſe doſt thou hide thyſelf from the hardened ſons of men? Diſpel once more with thy glorious light the miſt that is around us; point out to us the neceſſity of brotherly love; and give us the ſupreme felicity of enlarging the minds of thoſe of our fellow-creatures now loſt in barbariſm and ignorance, that this preſent age and ages yet to come may ſing and leap for joy at the knowledge of a Saviour, who will wipe the tears from every eye, and beſtow upon us and them unſpeakable joys which will laſt for evermore.

Before I quit this melancholy ſubject entirely, I muſt obſerve that the attorney of the plantation was not privy to the exceſſive puniſhment inflicted on the ſlaves by the overſeer whom I left upon it in June 1785; I ſpare his name in hopes he may ſee his error, but make this diſtinction becauſe a very different perſon acted in that capacity when I firſt went into the employ.

If a general emancipation of the ſlaves ſhould not be effected, ought we to be leſs liberal than the French and Spaniards, who have

have planted Chriſtianity in their iſlands, are by no means ſo ſevere in their diſcipline, and yet have experienced no bad effects from either? A great many faults committed by the ſlaves muſt be imputed to their ignorance. I remember a black ſeverely puniſhed on board a ſhip on the following occaſion: Finding a pair of ſhoes lying about the waiſt, he took and converted them to his own uſe, which being made known to the captain, he was ordered to be flogged, for in ſuch a confined place it was eaſy to aſcertain whoſe property they were, and, if this matter had been overlooked, it would have been a bad example to the ſhip's crew; the negro all the time of his puniſhment cried out, *Maſſa me no teevee, me takee.*

I ſhall conclude with remarking, that fortunes are not now ſo eaſily acquired as formerly in the iſland of Jamaica. The increaſe of white people of late years has been immenſe, though many who go from this country are carried off in a week's time, by the fever and flux, to which they are ſubject on their arrival; theſe are often got by imprudence, in exceſs of eating, drinking, or exerciſe, under a hot ſun, and being expoſed to the dews at night and the land-breeze, which, though it ſeems to come as a friend, often proves a fatal enemy. No-

thing is more deſtructive, particularly to our ſoldiers and ſeamen, than new rum. The fruits are wholeſome, when eaten moderately; but too great a liberty taken with them, brings on the flux, a diſorder much alleviated by the uſe of pomegranates. Bilious fevers are very common, for which bitters ſteeped in Madeira wine or old rum are given as a remedy; but in all fevers the healthy air of the mountains generally reſtores the patient, though much exhauſted.

Property is here exceedingly precarious. I have before obſerved that fires are particularly dangerous, in country as well as town; if a cane-piece once takes hold, there is no knowing where it will end, particularly if there is a ſtrong breeze. Earthquakes are frequent, (though I only felt one whilſt on the iſland) and ſometimes very dangerous, eſpecially near the ſea. The hurricanes are tremendous viſitations, and generally do much miſchief. The lightning is oft-times awful and vivid beyond deſcription; the heats are intenſe, exhauſt the vital powers, and conſequently ſhorten life. Many merchants come home emaciated every five years, and return quite renovated; yet what will not the thirſt of gain tempt people to endure?

I would not by what I have ſaid inſinuate

ate that all who reſide in the Weſt-Indies are avariciouſly inclined; there are many worthy exceptions, many liberal and conſcientious men, eſtimable citizens of the world, and ornaments to the commercial line. But vice, fraud, and cruelty, have ranged with frequent and ample ſteps unpuniſhed in thoſe iſlands. I ſhall only add, that thoſe are wiſe who know their own good, and the excellence of the conſtitution and climate of Great-Britain, which receives the produce of the moſt diſtant regions into her abundant ſtores.

OF

OF THE

QUADRUPEDS.

CLASS I.

THE horſes of the ſavannah breed are rather low and delicate, run very well in chaiſes and kittereens, are tolerably fleet, and pleaſant for the road. Horſe-racing has been lately introduced in the iſland, the rage for which is now ſo ſurpriſingly great, that the Creoles are ſometimes attended on the turf by negro boys with heavy bags of dollars, and large ſums are betted. The mules of this iſland are tall and well made, and anſwer for the mills better than the horſes. A good proof aſs will ſell for 100l. currency.

The oxen are remarkably large and ſtrong, long-horned, and much uſed for draught; on ſome plantations they are yoked to the mills. The beeves are in vaſt quantities all over the iſland, are very fine and large, and ſell to the butchers, who go to all quarters for them, at about 10l. a-head. The cows do

do not give more than a pint or a quart of milk a-day; butter has been made, but it is poor ſtuff. The ſheep in many parts are large, often extremely fat or lean; if ſent from home, they loſe their wool, which degenerates into hair; and it is wonderful to obſerve how the climate changes them. In England, their thick woolly coats defend them from the ſeverity of the winter, and afterwards afford a covering for mankind; whereas in Jamaica they have no occaſion for ſuch warmth, having a much more cool and ſuitable cloathing, and become in a ſhort time party-coloured.—In this hot country are no ſubterranean mines of coal, the woods affording fewel ſufficient for the wants of the inhabitants.

The goats thrive exceedingly in all parts, and are large; the fleſh of the young is excellent meat, and, with a little ſalted pork, makes good mock-turtle. The milk of the goat is very ſweet and good. Hogs are numerous, and of the middle ſize; they thrive beſt in crop-time, and become exceedingly fat by eating the offals of the ſugar and cane tops; at other times they feed chiefly on Guinea-corn. The boars are very fierce, and ſometimes gore one another to death.

When Columbus firſt diſcovered the Weſt-Indian iſlands, none of the animals here mentioned

mentioned had ever been ſeen by the natives, but were brought from the old world by the Spaniards.

CLASS II.——OF BIRDS.

THE carrion-crow is of the ſize of a full-grown turkey, ſoars to a vaſt height, and is of ſuch uſe in devouring dead carcaſes in and near the towns, that five pounds penalty is levied on any perſon who kills one of them. They are the means of preventing many diſtempers which might otherwiſe ariſe from nauſeous ſmells and infected air.

The pelican is a very large ſea-fowl, being ſixty inches in length from the point of his bill to the end of his tail, and nearly equal in bigneſs to a ſwan; the colour of the whole body is white; and a bag hangs down from his bill, which he ſometimes contracts and draws up in ſuch a manner that it is ſcarce viſible; at other times it is ſo dilated, as to contain many gallons of water. They fly in a right line at equal diſtances, generally direct their courſe where there

there is plenty of fiſh, and afford the gentry much diverſion in ſhooting them.

The Guinea fowls are in vaſt plenty; they fly by flocks in a line, and walk or run in the ſame order to the number of eighty or a hundred. This bird is well known in England.

Turtle-doves are very common and in much eſteem, as is alſo the ground-dove, a beautiful little bird, that runs before paſſengers at the diſtance of ten or twelve yards; the body is not much bigger than that of a lark, is thought very delicate eating, and makes a moſt excellent ſoup.

The partridge was brought here many years ſince, is wonderfully increaſed in number, but degenerated in ſize, being not much bigger than a quail, by which name it is generally known. It affords no great diverſion in ſhooting, nor do the dogs employed in the purſuit poſſeſs that admirable ſcent peculiar to more temperate climates. In the rainy ſeaſons, are plenty of teals, and ſome wild-ducks.

The moſt common birds are the black parroquets, which make a very diſagreeable noiſe, and pick up the new-ſown corn. They are as big as our magpies, and have bills like parrots. The negroes ſay, the black parroquets are good for *yam*, i. e. good

to eat; they are often knocked down with ſticks.

The birds of ſong are few in number, at the head of which may be placed the American mock-bird, generally called the nightingale. Many birds of the moſt beautiful plumage, with tufts of feathers on their heads, are found in the woods. The humming-birds are met with here, one kind of which is very diminutive, quite common, and ſucks the flowers upon the wing. They are ſhot with ſand. A number of owls of various kinds inhabit the woods, ſome of them very large, and beautifully diverſified.

CLASS III.——OF FISHES AND AMPHIBIOUS PRODUCTIONS.

UPON the banks and in the rivers of this iſland are found thoſe dreadful monſters the alligators, which have been ſo often deſcribed, that it is needleſs for me to ſay more of them than, that I have known them ſeize young children, ſheep, and goats; and many have been fired at with

with ſlugs and bullets, without being hindered from carrying off their prey.

The ſharks are very numerous, particularly in the bays and harbours, where many perſons have been devoured by them; ſome of the negroes are ſo expert in ſwimming and diving, and ſo little afraid of them, that they will attack and ſtab them in the belly with knives.

The ſea produces baraceutas, (which are excellent when they do not feed upon copperas rocks) albicores, and dolphins. The ſhoals of flying fiſh are numberleſs; and it is very entertaining to obſerve the purſuits of the dolphins, which leap a conſiderable height out of the water after them. The change of colour in the dolphin when dying is too quick and wonderful to deſcribe with preciſion.

Of the turtles or ſea-tortoiſes, there are four different ſorts; the trunk-turtle, the loggerhead, the hawk-bill, and the green-turtle. The trunk-turtle is rank and unwholeſome, larger than any other ſort, and has a higher and rounder back; the loggerhead is little better; the hawk-bill is of a purgative nature, but it produces the real tortoiſe-ſhell, which is ſo juſtly admired. The green-turtle is that which proves ſo agreeable to the palate when dreſſed with

proper ingredients, but they are three parts waſted in the voyage to England; it is only at Jamaica they are to be had in perfection; their general rendezvous is at the Grand Caymanes, which lies between Jamaica and Cuba, and where the ſhips generally take in their ſupply of them. The largeſt are about 250lb. weight; but thoſe of about 50lb. or 60lb. are reckoned the beſt. It is ſaid they are nine days in the act of generation, produce more eggs than any other of the oviparous tribe, and will come many hundred leagues to the Grand Caymanes to lay them.

There is alſo a land-turtle in this iſland, which is not bad eating; and alſo land-crabs, which the negroes ſometimes eat, but they are filthy looking things, and generally feed upon carrion. They burrow like rabbits, in the ground.

The rivers abound with excellent fiſh. Snappers, about the ſize of our large roaches, but flatter, are very common; mullets, which are much about the ſame ſize, with a more bluff head, are very delicate; calapavers, about the ſize of a middling jack, are innumerable, but hard to ſtrike; they are very delicious ſtewed in their fat; but the Jew-fiſh is reckoned the greateſt

greateſt delicacy, though I never ſaw any of them.

An extraordinary and much-eſteemed fiſh of exquiſite taſte and flavour, called the mountain-mullet, is found in the holes and cavities of rocks where the rain-water is left.

CLASS IV.——OF INSECTS AND REPTILES.

THE yellow ſnakes are generally met with in the woods, and ſometimes extend to the length of ten yards or more; the middle part of them is black and yellow, ſpeckled, and as thick as a man's thigh; they carry their heads erect, about a yard from the ground, are very ugly, and covered with filthy ſlime. As they trail along their unwieldy length upon the ground they may be obſerved without danger, nodding their heads backward and forward, and ſo ſlow in their motions, that a perſon may eaſily chop them into many parts. Like eels, they will live a long time after being thus ſevered. The negroes ſay they take

take their prey when ſleeping, and will ſtrangle the largeſt ox, by firſt winding themſelves about a tree (where in fact they may be often ſeen) and then about its neck, and after the beaſt is dead they ſuck the blood.

The black ſnakes are about a yard long, and ſmall, very quick, and much in the graſs. I never knew them do any miſchief, and they are a great enemy to the lizard tribe.

The ſcorpions chiefly frequent old wood, and often lurk in ſhoes that are laid by; the bite is very venomous. Their figure has been often deſcribed, and ſome authors are of opinion the poiſon lays in the ſting.

The centipede, an inhabitant of old wood, is alſo very dangerous, and has its name from the number of legs it poſſeſſes; they are ſomething like an inſect we have in England, but much larger, are often preſerved in ſpirits of wine, and brought home.

The lizards are of many different kinds; the ſpecies which dart along the ground in a zigzag way, and make a rattling noiſe, are of a very diſguſtful appearance, of a brown and yellow colour, ſpeckled like ſnakes; theſe do great harm by nipping the young buds of corn, they are not otherwiſe hurtful

ful to mankind, do not change their colour, have four feet (as all other lizards have), their head is like that of a fiſh, and they have a long tail tapering to the point. Strangers are much alarmed by the ruſtling noiſe they make, particularly near the penguin fences. It is very diverting to ſee the black ſnake ſeize the lizard, round which he twiſts himſelf, and darts his tongue into his prey, which lays as if dead, and when the ſnake begins to ſlacken, the wily victim ſuddenly darts from the circle in which he is incloſed, and is chaſed into ſome hole by the ſnake, from which he ſeldom eſcapes.

There are other lizards which go much about the houſes, and ſome which abide chiefly upon trees; the former change colour as you look on them, and from a deep black will become a charming blue; they have lively little eyes, and feed chiefly upon flies and ants. Another and a leſs ſpecies take the colour of old laths, and ſeem incruſted by the wood; in this ſtate they lie for their prey, and readily take it. Some are of a bright brown, ſpotted with yellow, and are frequently blowing out their red gullets. Thoſe that are ſeen on trees are of a beautiful green, and are quite harmleſs and familiar. When one of them is killed, the ants (of which there are myriads of many different

different kinds) run off with the body in an hour or two. The brown lizard has a very loathſome and diſagreeable appearance, is of a more ugly ſhape than any I have mentioned, and is ſtreaked with yellow. I have heard of ſome dangerous lizards, but never ſaw any.

The ants are very troubleſome about the houſes, particularly the large brown ant, the black ant, and the ſmall ſugar ant; they ſpoil the proviſions and every thing they can get to, are very diſagreeable in the cane-pieces, and bite the feet and legs of the people employed. They build their neſts in the woods, upon the branches of trees, to the ſize of an anchor, which the negroes often get, as the eggs are eſteemed good food for the poultry.

The muſquitoes (inſects ſo much ſpoken of, and ſo troubleſome in the hot countries) make a buzzing noiſe, are bigger than a gnat, and are armed with a proboſcis, which they dart into the fleſh with ſuch violence as ſometimes to occaſion a fever; they are moſt hurtful to new-comers of roaſt-beef habits. At night the inhabitants guard their beds with muſquitoe nets, which are in general made of checked muſlin or ſomething fine, ſo as to prevent theſe inſects from finding acceſs through them; they are contrived

to

to fall down all at once, and reach to the floor on every ſide; the inſects are bruſhed out before bed-time; fumigation is however the only thing that drives them out entirely, and of this the remedy is almoſt as bad as the diſeaſe.

The crickets, locuſts, and graſshoppers, are numerous and large, and make an uncommon noiſe at night.

A very deſtructive and diſagreeable inſect called the cock-roach, frequents the houſes; they live chiefly in chinks and crannies, but get amongſt cloaths and deſtroy them faſt; there are innumerable multitudes of them, and when killed they ſtink abominably.

Of the papilionaceous tribe the number and variety are exceedingly great. Some of them are troubleſome, but have a rooted enemy in an inſect about the ſize of a bat, called the muſquitoe-hawk.

As the cochineal is a native of the Weſt-Indies and South America, though not common in Jamaica, I have here ſubjoined an extract from the ingenious Abbé Raynal's account of that curious and valuable inſect.

"The cochineal is an inſect of the ſize and form of a bug; the two ſexes are diſtinct, as in moſt other animals. The female fixed upon a point of the plant almoſt from the firſt inſtant of its birth, remains

always attached to it by a kind of trunk, and preſents to the eye only an hemiſpherical cruſt, which covers all the other parts; this covering is changed twice in twenty-five days, and is ſprinkled over with a white and thick duſt, which is immiſcible with water. At this period, which is that of puberty, the male, which is much ſmaller and more ſlightly made, iſſues out of a farinaceous tube, by means of wings, with which it is provided; he flutters over the immoveable females, and fixes upon each of them. The ſame female is thus viſited by ſeveral males, who periſh ſoon after fecundation. The bulk of the female viſibly enlarges till a drop of liquid, which eſcapes from under her, ſhews that the eggs, which are in great number, will ſoon make their appearance. The little inſects burſt their covering at the time of their birth, and ſoon ſpread themſelves over the plant to chooſe a favourable ſpot to fix upon.

" The ſhrub, which is called by the name of nopal or Indian fig, is about five feet high; its ſtem is fleſhy, large, flattened, downy, a little rough, and covered with cluſters of thorns regularly diſpoſed upon its ſurface; it branches out very much, and grows narrow, as well as its branches, at every point of ramification; this gives to the

the portion of the plant thus made narrow the form of an oval, thick, and thorny leaf; it has no other leaves but theſe. Its flowers, ſcattered over the young ſtems, are compoſed of a ſcaly calix, which ſupports ſeveral petals and ſtamina. The piſtil, ſurmounted with a ſingle ſtyle, and concealed at the bottom of the calix, grows along with it into a fruit fit for eating; it reſembles a fig, and is full of ſeeds fixed in a kind of reddiſh pulp.—There are ſeveral ſpecies of nopal; thoſe which have a ſmooth ſtem, with a number of thorns placed too cloſe to each other, are not fit for the breeding of the cochineal. Theſe inſects thrive well on that ſort which have but few thorns, and a downy ſurface proper to give them a firmer footing. Wind and cold rain, as well as too much damp, are injurious to the plant. The mode of lopping the trees is not advantageous; it is better to replant it every ſix years, by putting ſeveral pieces of the ſtems into cavities of ſome depth diſpoſed in a quincunx or a ſquare, at the diſtance of ſix or eight feet from each other. A ſpot thus planted, and diſtinguiſhed by the name of nopalry, is uſually no more than two or three acres in extent. The cultivator ſhould take care to rid them of the caterpillar.—Eighteen months after the plantation,

the nopal is covered with cochineals; but in order to diſtribute them more regularly over the whole plant, and to prevent them from injuring each other from their proximity, ſmall neſts, made of the outſide rind of the cocoa, and filled with twelve or fifteen females ready to lay their eggs, are fixed to ſpines at certain diſtances; the little ones which come out, fix themſelves on the nopal, and attain to their utmoſt growth in two months, which is the limited duration of their life. They are then gathered; and this operation is continued every two months, from October till May. The crop may be leſs valuable if it ſhould be mixed with another kind of cochineal of a lower price, or if there be a great quantity of males, which are in little eſtimation, becauſe they are leſs, and that they fall off before the time. This crop is to be gathered ſome days before the laying of the eggs, either to prevent the loſs of the eggs, which are rich in colour, or to hinder the little ones from fixing on a plant which is already exhauſted, and muſt be left to itſelf for a few months. Beginning then by the bottom of the plant, the cochineals are ſucceſſively detached with a knife, and are made to fall into a baſon placed underneath, one of the edges of which being flattened, adapts itſelf

itſelf exactly to the plant, which is afterwards cleaned with the ſame knife or with a cloth.

"Immediately before the rainy ſeaſon comes on, in order to prevent the total deſtruction of the cochineals, which might be occaſioned by the unwholeſomeneſs of the air, the branches of the nopal, loaded with infant inſects, are cut off; theſe branches are laid up in the houſes, where they maintain their freſhneſs as all mucilaginous plants do. Here the cochineals thrive in the bad ſeaſon. As ſoon as that is paſſed, they are placed on the trees, where the vivifying ſpirit of the air ſoon makes them propagate.

"The wild cochineal, a different ſpecies from the fine or meſteque cochineal we have been ſpeaking of, but cultivated in the ſame places and on the ſame plant, does not require as much care and precaution; it is a more hardy inſect, and bears the injuries of the air better: The crop of it is conſequently leſs variable in the produce, and may be gathered all the year. This inſect differs from the other inaſmuch as it is more voracious, leſs abounding in colour, and enveloped in a kind of cotton, which it extends two lines all round it. This ſpecies multiplies more readily, ſpreads farther and faſter,

faſter, without any aſſiſtance, ſo that a nopalry is ſoon covered with them. As its produce is more certain, as its price is equivalent to two-thirds of that of the finer ſort, and as it propagates upon all ſpecies of nopal, it may be cultivated with ſucceſs, but ſeparately, becauſe if it were placed near the other, it would ſtarve it, and the other might alſo be ſmothered under the down. This ſpecies is alſo found in Peru, upon a very prickly nopal, which is very common there.

" As ſoon as the cochineals are gathered, they are plunged in hot water to kill them. There are different ways of drying them: The beſt is to expoſe them to the ſun for ſeveral days, by which means they acquire a red brown colour, which the Spaniards call *renegrida;* the ſecond method is to put them in an oven, where they aſſume a greyiſh colour ſtreaked with veins of purple, which hath given them the name of *jaſpeada;* but the moſt imperfect, which is what the Indians moſt generally practiſe, conſiſts in putting them on plates along with their cakes of maize, in which proceſs they are frequently burnt, and are called *negra.* Though the cochineal be claſſed in the animal kingdom, the ſpecies of all others the moſt likely to corrupt, yet it never ſpoils: Without

Without any other care than that of merely keeping it in a box, it hath been preſerved in all its virtue for ages.

" This valuable production would probably proceed in different parts of Mexico, but hitherto ſcarce any, beſide the province of Oaxaca, hath ſeriouſly attended to it. The crops are more plentiful on a barren than on a fertile ſoil, and have experienced leſs accidents in an agreeably mild expoſure than where the heat and cold were more ſenſibly felt."

OF

TREES AND PLANTS.

THE PLANTAIN TREE.

THE fruit of this tree is the principal and moſt eſteemed bread-fruit; it is about the thickneſs of a man's wriſt, incloſed in a huſk, and is about five inches long; many grow in cluſters round the pedicle. Before it is ripe, it is either boiled or baked at the fire, and has a mealy taſte; but when ripe, it is very delicious, and, freſh from the tree, eats like a pear, but of a more pleaſing flavour. It loves to be near water, in hollow ground, and riſes to the height of ten or twelve feet; the leaves are about ſeven feet long, a foot and an half broad, of a fine green colour, and are frequently uſed for dreſſing bliſters; the ſtem bears fruit only once, but ſprouts are continually ſhooting from amongſt the roots of the ſtem, and theſe bear fruit in a twelvemonth. It is not a native of the iſland, but was carried thither from the Canaries. Something like a croſs appears on the fruit.

The

The Pawpaw Tree, if it may be called a tree, has a ſpreading root, grows to twenty-five feet in height; its trunk is green, thick, tender, and ſucculent, and though often of the thickneſs of a man's thigh, it may be cut down with a knife at one ſtroke. The leaves ſtand on long pedicles, at the top forming a very beautiful head; they are two feet or more in breadth, and are deeply divided into five or ſeven ſegments; they are of a deep green on the upper, but of a paler on the under ſide; the flowers are yellow, moderately large, and hang in cluſters. The fruit is large, and, when ripe, yellow.

The Piſtachio Tree grows to a conſiderable ſize; the trunk is thick, and covered with a brown cracked bark; the branches are numerous and ſpreading; the male flowers are arranged into looſe catkins; the female are very ſmall, and are ſucceeded by the piſtachio nuts; the leaves are pinated on each ſide the fibre, with an odd one at the end.

Of the Indian Corn the root is fibrous; the plant grows to eight or ten feet high; the ſtalk is an inch or more in diameter, erect, robuſt, and ſucculent; the leaves are very numerous, two feet or more in length, of a bright graſſy green, narrow, and pointed at the extremities; the ſeeds are yellow

in the inſide, of a very large huſk, about the ſize of a horſe-bean, and ſtick cloſe together in many rows to a ſoft ſubſtance about four inches long, and half as thick as a man's wriſt; the ſeeds are rubbed off, and the negroes parch and eat them. Amongſt this corn I have often obſerved a weed about three feet high, with a flower very like the paſſion-flower.

Caſhaw Tree, or Virginia Thorn, grows to twenty feet high, is ramous, the leaves divided deep in many places, ſomething like thoſe of our hawthorn; the fruit is of the ſize of a ſmall nut, and of a fine ſcarlet colour; the branches are armed with very long, ſharp, and robuſt thorns.

The Pomegranate Tree has a large root; the form of the plant is naturally that of a ſhrub, but here it may be called a ſmall tree; the branches and twigs are long and ſlender, armed with ſpines; the leaves ſtand without order, are oblong, moderately broad, and of a dark green; the flowers grow from the ſides of the branches, are large, and of a fine deep red colour; the fruit is bigger than an orange, round, and covered with a hard green rind; within, it is formed into nine cells; the ſeeds are numerous, roundiſh, and red when ripe; a membrane divides every cell of the fruit into two parts.—The Pome-

granate

granate is of an aſtringent nature, and the beſt remedy for fluxes, which are very common in this iſland and all parts of the Weſt-Indies.

The Silver Tree, the root of which is long and brachiated, grows to twenty feet high, its trunk is ſtraight and regular, its branches long, its bark is of a pale grey, and variegated with ſpots of a bright ſilver-white; the leaves ſtand in pairs, are ſmooth, thin, and of a greeniſh yellow, an inch long, and near as broad at the baſe, whence they gradually diminiſh to a point; they are undivided at the edges, and have ſcarce any pedicles; the flowers are ſmall, whitiſh, and grow at the *alæ* of the leaves. It is a native of this iſland; Sir Hans Sloane calls it, *Myrtifolia arbor cortice argenteo, flore pallide albicante.*

Of the American Aloe, the root is very large, oblong, crooked, and as it were jointed; the leaves are five feet long, ſix inches broad near the baſe, and two or three inches thick; they are hollowed, and of a bluiſh green colour; the extremity terminates in a robuſt brown ſpine of two inches long, and the edges are beſet with ſpines of the ſame kind, only ſmaller, and bent downwards; the ſtalk is round, as thick as a man's thigh, and ſometimes twenty feet high;

the upper part of this ſtalk forms a ſpike of flowers ſix feet or more in length; the flowers are yellow, and ſtand in cluſters on pedicles, growing gradually ſhorter in a regular and beautiful manner, towards the top like a pyramid.

Of the Coffee Tree, the root is compoſed of a number of long, not very thick, ramifications; the ſtem is round, two or three inches thick when well grown, and the tree ten, twelve, or fourteen high; it ſends out branches from near the bottom, and thence all the way to the top; theſe ſtand two together on the oppoſite ſides of the trunk; they are while young very flexile, and covered with a whitiſh bark, but as they grow older this becomes of the ſame brown colour with that of the trunk. The leaves ſtand two at a joint; they are in ſhape much like the common bay leaf, but larger, thinner, ſofter, and of a paler green colour; they ſtand on ſhort pedicles, are four or five inches long, and two inches wide, broadiſh at the middle, narrow at the baſe, and terminate in a very long narrow point; they are ſomewhat undulated, are of a pale green colour on the upper ſide, and whitiſh underneath. The flowers ſtand in little cluſters, four or five together, in the *alæ* of the leaves; they have a ſhort pedicle, and

are

are white or a little reddiſh, moderately large, and of a ſweet ſmell; the berries are green at firſt, afterwards red, and when full ripe, black; they are of the bigneſs of a large currant-berry; they are pulled when red, and being dried and the outſide taken off the white ſeed, which we ſee white before it is roaſted, afterwards of a dark brown, is ground into powder, from whence our coffee.

Of the Spaniſh Woodbine, the root is tuberous, roundiſh, and of the bigneſs of a man's head; the ſtalk is angular, firm, and tortuous; it winds itſelf about trees, and grows thus to twenty feet high, is very much branched, and of a browniſh colour. The leaves ſtand ſingly at four inches diſtance from one another, with pedicles of two inches or more in length; the leaf is divided into ſeven oblong ſegments, is narroweſt at the baſe, broader in the middle, and thence ſmaller again to the point; the middle ſegment is four inches long, and an inch broad, the others are gradually ſmaller as they recede from it; the flowers are large, of a bright yellow, very beautiful, and ſweet ſcented; they ſtand ſingly on pedicles of three or four inches long ariſing from the leaves; it is a native of the iſland.

The

The Contrayerva Plant, which is of ſingular efficacy in various fevers incident to this iſland, acting as a fine ſudorific, and an excellent ſtomachic when infuſed in Madeira or old rum, deſerves particular notice. The root is oblong, of the thickneſs of a man's little finger, of an irregularly protuberant ſurface, of a reddiſh brown colour on the outſide, and white within. Its texture is fibrous, its taſte extremely bitter; it deſcends obliquely into the ground, and is furniſhed with a great number of large fibres. From this riſe five or ſix leaves, each on its ſeparate pedicle; the pedicles are five inches long, round, and reddiſh; the leaves at firſt are of a kind of triangular figure, and only undulated at the edges, but afterwards they become more deeply ſinuated; it bears a multitude of flowers, is thick and juicy, and when mature the ſeeds are white, roundiſh, and pointed.

The Sugar Cane, the root of which is thick and fibrous, riſes to ten feet high or more; the ſtalk is round, jointed, and three or four inches thick; the joints are three or four inches apart; when the ſoil is rich, rather more; before it is ripe, the colour is green, but, as it ripens, grows yellow, and ſends out a flower ſomething like the reed at the top; the leaves ſtand ſingly at the joints,

joints, are three feet long, very narrow, and end in a point; the ſtalk is full, of a whitiſh and very pleaſant juice; the uſe of which, and of the reſt of the plant, I have before deſcribed. It is uſeful in every part.

The Tamarind Tree is very common in Jamaica; it riſes from a ſtrong wide-ſpreading root to the height of twenty-five feet, and the branches are very thick and ſpreading; the trunk is often ſo thick that two men can ſcarcely fathom it; its bark is of a greyiſh brown; the wood firm and reddiſh; the leaves are long and pinated; the flowers ſtand in cluſters, and are of a pale roſe colour; the fruit is like a bean-pod in ſhape and ſize, and has three or four protuberances, where the ſeeds lie; its outer rind is hardiſh, thick, and brown; its inner rind tender and greeniſh; the ſpace between theſe contains a thick blackiſh pulpy matter mixed with fibres. It is a very fine acid, and good in fevers. This fruit is put into ſmall kegs filled with the juice of the ſugar cane three parts boiled, and in this ſtate ſent home.

The Bananas are of the ſame kind as the plantain, but not eaten till ripe; and then are of a ſweeter and more luſcious taſte than the other. From the juice of them may be made good vinegar.

The

The Caſſada or Caſſava Root is uſed inſtead of bread; the plant grows to about four or five feet in height, and is much cultivated; the juice expreſſed from the root (which is about the thickneſs of a man's wriſt) to prepare it for bread, is poiſonous, as well as the root eaten with its juice. Yet this juice may be boiled over the fire till a great part is evaporated; and the remainder, if it be far evaporated, and ſet by to ferment, will be ſweet, and ſerve in the place of honey; if leſs evaporated, and ſet by to ferment, it will make a very good and wholeſome vinegar.

The Yams are ſomething of the potatoe kind, growing chiefly in the mountains in odd ſhapes, under-ground, ſometimes as thick and long as a man's leg; theſe are good boiled or baked, and very mealy.

The Indian Jaſmine grows to the height of ſix feet, is ſtrong, and well branched; the leaves grow in pairs, are broad in the middle, end in a narrow point, are of a ſhining green colour, and are perfectly ſmooth. The flowers are large and white, of a fine fragrant ſcent, and ſtand generally three or five in a cluſter. The fruit is a ſmall black berry, containing one ſeed.

Guinea Pepper has an oblong, ſlender, and fibrous root; it grows to the height of four feet,

feet, is much branched, and the leaves are not quite ſo large as thoſe of an hazle. The flowers riſe from the wings of the leaves, are of a white or yellowiſh colour, and the fruit is a berry without any pulp; ſome are in ſhape like a barberry, ſome like a flat pea-huſk, and others are much in the form of a cylinder; the variety, in ſhort, both in ſize and ſhape, is very great. The ſeeds are particularly pungent. Of the large peppers they make what is called the pepper vinegar, which is much in eſteem, as is alſo the Cayenne.

The Cocoa is about the ſize of a common potatoe, but ſhaped like an egg; the outward huſk is hard and ſtringy; the core or kernel is eaten boiled or roaſted, and in taſte ſomewhat reſembles a potatoe.

The ſweet Potatoes are found almoſt all over the iſland, and are much in eſteem; the ſtalks and leaves run ſpreading along the ground like the ſtrawberry; the leaf in ſhape is ſomething like that of the ivy, ſmooth, and rather larger; it bears a white flower.

There are many ſorts of Peaſe and Beans natural to the iſland; the kind in the garden belonging the eſtate on which I lived, grew much after the manner of our kidney-beans; the leaf very ſimilar, the flower quite

white. The bean called Barrowby grows upon buſhes to the height of ſeven or eight feet; it yields a yellow flower, after which comes a ſmall pod that contains the beans. The Sugar Beans are planted at the foot of trees, mount up like ivy, and yield an amazing increaſe.

The Indigo Plant, as deſcribed by the Abbé Raynal, is a ſtraight and rather buſhy plant; from its root ariſes a ligneous brittle ſtem, of the height of two feet, branching from the beginning, white on the inſide, and covered with a greyiſh bark. The leaves are alternate, compoſed of ſeveral ſmall leaves, diſpoſed in two rows along a common coſta, which is terminated by a ſingle folium, and furniſhed at its baſis with two ſmall membranes which are called *ſtipulæ*. At the extremity of each branch ariſe cluſters of reddiſh papilionaceous flowers, rather ſmall, and compoſed of a number of petals; the ſtamina to the number of ſix, and the piſtil, ſurmounted with a ſingle ſtyle, are arranged as they moſtly are in herbaceous flowers; the piſtil is changed into a ſmall rounded pod, ſlightly curved, one inch in length, and a line and a half in breadth, full of cylindrical, ſhining, and browniſh ſeeds.

This plant requires a light ſoil, well tilled, and never deluged with water; for this reaſon

ſon ſpots are preferred which are ſloping, becauſe this poſition preſerves the indigo plant from the ſtagnation of the rain, which might deſtroy it. Low and flat grounds, with channels to draw off the water, might alſo be employed for this culture, and if care be taken only to plant them after the rainy ſeaſon. The ſeed is ſown in little furrows made by the hoe, two or three inches in depth, and at the diſtance of a foot from each other, and in a ſtraight line, taking care to weed it. Moiſture cauſes this plant to ſhoot above the ſurface in three or four days; it is ripe at the end of two months. When it begins to flower, it is cut with pruning-knives, and again at the end of every ſix weeks, if the weather be rainy. It laſts about two years, after which term it degenerates; it is then taken up and planted again.

It is diſtinguiſhed into ſeveral ſpecies, of which only two are cultivated, the true indigo, the ſort we are ſpeaking of, and the baſtard indigo, which differs from the former, in having a much higher, more woody, and more durable ſtem, in having its foliola longer and narrower, its pods more curved, and its ſeeds black. Though the firſt be ſold at a higher price, it is uſually advantageous to cultivate the other, becauſe it is not ſo frequently renewed, is heavier, and yields

more leaves, the produce of which however is leſs from an equal quantity; the firſt will grow in many different ſoils, the ſecond ſucceeds beſt in thoſe that are moſt expoſed to rain; both when young are liable to be burnt by the ſun, or choaked by the web of an inſect, and ſometimes the leaves are devoured in twenty-four hours by caterpillars.

Care ſhould be taken in gathering it in, that the valuable farina of the leaves ſhould not be ſhaken off; when gathered, it is thrown into a ſteeping-vat, (a large tub filled with water); here it has done fermenting in twenty-four hours; a cock is then turned to let the water into the pounding tub; the firſt is then cleaned out, that freſh plants may be thrown in.

The water now is found to be impregnated with a very ſubtile earth, which alone conſtitutes the blue ſubſtance we want, which muſt be ſeparated from the uſeleſs ſalt of the plant, becauſe this makes the dregs ſwim on the ſurface. To effect this, the water is forcibly agitated with wooden buckets full of holes, and fixed to a long handle. This part of the proceſs requires great precaution: If this agitation be diſcontinued too ſoon, the part that is uſed in dying, not being ſufficiently ſeparated from the ſalt, would be loſt; if, on the contrary,

it

it were to be agitated too long after the complete ſeparation, the parts would again unite, and the ſalt reacting on the dregs, would alter its colour, and make what is called burnt indigo. When they perceive, by taking a little into a clean veſſel, the coloured particles collect, they leave off ſtirring, to allow time for it to ſettle to the bottom till the water is clear; holes made in the tub are opened gradually, at different heights, and the water let out.

The blue dregs remaining at the bottom having acquired the conſiſtence of a thick muddy liquid, cocks are then opened, which draw it off from the ſettler. After it is ſtill more cleared of much ſuperfluous water in this third and laſt tub, it is drained into ſacks, from whence, when water no longer filters through the cloth, this matter now becomes of a thicker conſiſtence, it is put into cheſts, where it entirely loſes its moiſture. At the end of three months the indigo is fit for ſale. It is uſed in waſhing, to give a bluiſh colour to the linen. Painters alſo employ it in their water colours; and dyers cannot make a fine blue without indigo. It is ſown as corn in Europe. It is very plentiful at Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Louiſiana, San Domingo, and Mexico, in America.

The

The Alicada, or, as the negroes call it, Alligator Pear, is the fruit, the inſide of which Sir Hans Sloane calls the vegetable marrow,, and indeed it is equally good, as nutritive, and more pleaſant to the taſte than the fineſt marrow; it is as big as an orange, but more of the ſhape of a large pear; the ſtone in the inſide is large and round, and the juice that proceeds from it very fit for marking linen; the outer ſkin is thin and ſmooth; it is generally cut through the middle to the ſtone, which comes eaſily out, and the eatable part is ſoon ſeparated; it is ſaid to provoke venery.

The Star-Apple grows to the height of the quince tree; the fruit is very large, but thick, and ſo covered with leaves as ſcarcely to be ſeen.

The Mammee Tree is very general, the fruit of a deep red, which contains a rough flat long ſtone.

The Genap bears a fruit about the ſize of a magnum bonum plumb; when the outſide rind, which is ſmooth and green, is taken off, nothing in the world can be more delicious than the pulpy juice of this fruit; the inſide is of a rich purple colour.

The Hog Plumb is a native of the iſland, grows in the fences as the ſloes with us, is not

not unpleaſant to the taſte, and about the ſize of an ordinary plumb.

The Cabbage Tree, ſo called from its producing a vegetable in all reſpects like our cabbage, grows to a vaſt height in the mountains; the ſtem is ſometimes two hundred and ſeventy feet high; like the cocoa-nut tree, it has no branches but at the top, where they ſprout to the length of about twelve or fourteen feet, covered with ſmall long leaves, in ſuch regular order, that they appear at a diſtance as if but one leaf; in the middle of theſe branches grows the fruit, as big as a man's leg, as white as milk, and very ſweet, exactly like our cabbage. The tree is generally cut down for the ſake of getting the fruit; and if it were not, it would immediately decay. This tree alſo bears little twigs between the cabbage and the branches, whence ſhoot out little berries, which are good hog-meat; the body of the tree is full of rings, at half a foot diſtance from each other.

Of Ginger, the root is tuberous and knotty, the thickneſs of a man's finger, rather flat, ſpreads out diverſely, and of an extremely acrid and fiery taſte; the plant riſes about ten inches high, and about the ſame thickneſs as the root; it is covered with green *ſquama* reſembling rudiments of leaves,

leaves, and is terminated by a kind of oval ſpike. It is very beautiful, and compoſed of ſcales of a fine yellow and bright ſcarlet colour, or elſe of a fine ſhining green, variegated with white; from the boſom of theſe ſcales the flowers come forth; they are of a mixed reddiſh and whitiſh colour, are variegated with yellow ſpots, ſmall, and of ſhort continuance.

The ſtalks on which the flowers are produced have no perfect leaves on them; but beſides theſe there ariſe alſo other ſtalks, if they may be ſo called; theſe are compoſed of the baſes of multitude of leaves ſurrounding one another, and grow to two feet or more in height; the leaves ſeparate at their tops, and hang down looſe; they are about ſix or eight inches long, and an inch or more broad, ſoft to the touch, pointed at the extremities, and are of a bright green colour. The roots are preſerved, or ſent over in their crude ſtate; it is an excellent ſtomachic, and is peculiarly pleaſant to the taſte when preſerved; it is alſo good when grated into cane juice, juſt before it is thrown out of the coppers for ſugar.

The Button Tree has a root large and ſpreading, grows thirty feet high, and its trunk is often a foot in diameter; the bark is tolerably ſmooth, and of a pale grey colour;

lour; the branches are numerous and ſpreading; the leaves ſtand in pairs, have ſhort pedicles, are of an oval figure, broadeſt at the extremity, ſomewhat narrow for their length, are an inch and a half long, and about three quarters of an inch broad, ſmooth, and of a pale yellowiſh green; the leaves towards the extremities of the branches differ from theſe, in that they are narrow-pointed; theſe extremities are divided into ſeveral twigs, on which ſtand oval cluſters of flowers, which are ſmall and red.

Mahogany, well known for its beauty and uſe in domeſtic furniture, is frequently found in this iſland; it is a ſpecies of cedar, of a very large ſize, ſo as to be cut into planks of ſix feet in breadth.

The Mangle Tree, or Manglier, grows along the banks of rivers; bunches of filaments part from its flexible branches, and hang to the earth, where they take root, and grow into new trees,—which again multiply; the feet of theſe afford an excellent nurſery to various kinds of ſhell-fiſh.

Of the Caſhew Tree, the nut is very well known with us, and the ſhell contains a vaſt quantity of oil of a burning nature; the kernel is good when freed from the oil, either raw or roaſted; theſe trees grow in great abundance, to a conſiderable height,

and are very ramous and ſpreading; the bloſſom is ſmall, and produces an apple ſhaped like a pear, at the end of which is a nut in the ſhape of a kidney; there are two ſorts of trees, the male bears a beautiful red apple when ripe, and the female a yellow one; both are of a delicious flavour, the former more acid than the latter, which is exquiſitely ſweet; the Creoles uſe them in punch; they are of a very aſtringent nature, and grow naturally in Jamaica; the apples are preſerved and ſent home, and are common in London.

The Pimento Tree, which bears the Jamaica pepper, or alſpice, grows to more than thirty feet high, ſtraight, not thick, and covered with a grey ſhining bark; it branches out much, and the leaves are of a bright green, not unlike in ſhape to the bay leaves; it bears berries, which change from green to a ſmooth black; they are taken unripe, and dried in the ſun. This tree ſprings out of the mountains.

Of the Manchioneal Tree, the wood is much eſteemed for cabinet-work, being very durable, taking a fine poliſh, and, it is ſaid, is not liable to be eaten by worms. This tree abounds with a milky cauſtic juice; before it is cut down they make fires round the trunk to burn out the juice,

otherwiſe

otherwiſe thoſe who cut it would be in danger of loſing their ſight by its flying into their eyes; for ſhould the juice touch the ſkin, bliſters immediately follow; and if it falls on linen, it turns black, and waſhes into holes. The like danger to the eyes is to be dreaded from the ſaw-duſt, to prevent which the workmen cover their faces with fine lawn. This tree produces a fruit ſomething like a golden pippin, which if ignorantly eaten inflames the mouth and throat to a great degree, and is very dangerous to the ſtomach unleſs timely remedies are inſtantly applied; the rain waſhing the wood and leaves of this tree makes it dangerous to ſtand under, the very beaſts by inſtinct avoiding it.

The Logwood runs along a great tract of earth, amongſt the other trees of the foreſt; as does alſo what we call the Supple Jack.

The Phyſic Nut grows upon a ſmall tree not three yards high, and contains a kernel quite white. Several of them are found in the cavities of a black ſhell or pod, and are of a purgative quality. From theſe the famous caſtor oil is extracted.

The Cacao Tree, the nut of which is uſed for making chocolate, is about a foot and a half thick; it grows about eight feet high; the leaf is ſhaped like that of the plumb-

tree, but larger; the branches are large and ſpreading; and the nuts, which hang regularly amongſt the branches by a tough limber ſtalk, are about the bigneſs of a man's two fiſts; there are two crops a-year. The cod is about half an inch thick, neither ſpringy nor woody, but brittle, and ſomething harder than the rind of a lemon, like which the grain is coarſe and unequal; they are of a dark green colour, which changes to a bright yellow, and as they ripen, becomes red; they mature gradually, and are laid in heaps to ſweat, when the planters burſt the ſhell with their hands, and take out the nuts, which lie in rows like grains of maize, an hundred in a cod, and theſe are the only ſubſtance contained in it; they are ſpread on mats to dry, and will keep well, having a tough ſkin and much oil, whereby they are preſerved from ſalt water; it bears from the nut after having been planted four or five years, but it muſt as much as poſſible be ſheltered from the ſun, by interſperſing rows of plantain and other ſhady trees.

The Mangroves grow cloſe by the ſea-ſide, as willows by our rivers, but are umbrageous and of a beautiful foliage; theſe trees are low, and their roots have ſome reſemblance to the human form, from whence their

their name; in many parts they line the ſhore, and have a beautiful effect from their verdant appearance; the negroes are employed to cut them half way under water.

The Cotton Plant, on which the cotton is found, riſes to the height of ſix or ſeven feet; the leaf is ſomething like that of a currant; the flower is pale, tinged with purple, which leaves behind it a black pod containing the cotton, which is pulled by the negroes, the ſeed being beaten out of it, in ſome places with ſticks, but in a much readier way by an engine, through which the ſeeds fall; it is then put into bags, after the manner of hops, and ſent home; many of the white Creoles have no other plantations than theſe, which are eaſily conducted and at little expence.

There is much Braſileta Wood in the iſland; and the Lignum Vitæ, the gum of which is of ſuch uſe in medicine, alſo thrives here.

The Guavas grow upon a low tree, and are very like a ſmall pear.

The Sapadillo is about the ſize of a bergamot pear, growing upon a pretty high tree; when firſt gathered it is white and clammy, but grows ſweet and as clear as ſpring-water if laid by for two or three days, and the fruit which was before hard becomes ſoft

ſoft and luſcious. Within are found two or three black ſtones about the ſize of a pumpkin ſeed.

The Ananas, or Pine Apples, abound every where, but muſt be planted at different times of the year to bring about a conſtant ſucceſſion; a particular ſort are ripe when quite black, and are reckoned to have the fineſt flavour, being moſt in eſteem; this is the Ripley Pine: A ſecond ſort is the Buckara, or White People's Pine: And a third ſort, called the Negro Pine, which is worſt of all. They are all known by their huſks.

The Muſk-Melons are in great plenty and perfection, as are alſo the Water-Melons, and need little or no cultivation; the latter have not much flavour, but are colder than a turnip, wateriſh, and full of black ſeeds, which the mulattoes often ſtick on their faces by way of ornament. The whole iſland abounds with the fineſt antiſcorbutics in the world; there is a ſmall plant which, when gathered and decocted, is ſimilar in taſte, and anſwers all the purpoſes of liquorice. Wild Cucumbers, about the ſize of our guerkins, are very abundant, as are alſo Pumpkins and various other fruit.

The Penguins are planted for fences, and are at firſt ſight often miſtaken for pine apple ſuckers, but they are larger, much longer, and

and fortified with tremendous prickles; the fruit, which is very indifferent, grows up to the top from a ſtalk that ſprings from the middle of the plant, and is not above the ſize of a pullet's egg.

A plant grows here to the height of ten or twelve feet, without either branch or leaf, covered from top to bottom with ſharp prickles, in tufts; it is as thick as a man's thigh when at full growth, ſpreads much, and ſerves for a fence; it has variety of names, is ſpongy and full of juice, the outſide a ſmooth green, but it is ugly and dangerous on account of the prickles.

Such are the things my ſhort reſidence here afforded me an opportunity of learning; but to deſcribe every particular of the iſland of Jamaica, to give a minute detail of its commercial conſequence to this country, and of its natural and artificial curioſities, would require the leiſure of a life more proſperous than my own, and a volume much larger than the one I now preſent to the public.

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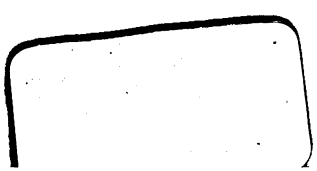
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